

Education

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Published by School Programs Division (Kindergarten to Grade 12) of Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth

Early Childhood Development: A Message from the Minister

Early childhood development is a key to preparing learners for success in school and in the future. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (MECY) is pleased to be involved with educational partners in a number of initiatives that support early childhood development and early intervention. These programs are catalysts for future growth and development and promote success for all learners.

The first years of a child's life are critical to future learning. To help ensure that children are getting the best start possible, MECY supports the use of the Early Development Instrument (EDI). The EDI provides important information regarding how well children are doing in the following five areas of development: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge. All school divisions are using the EDI to collect data on Kindergarten children. The information from the EDI helps school divisions develop plans for services and programs that meet the unique needs of children and parents.

It has been encouraging to see school divisions develop such plans for preschoolers based on EDI results. School divisions have proactively partnered with parents, the community, and Healthy Child Manitoba to develop successful preschool services and programs based on EDI information. The Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI) grant has been used to help support many of these initiatives.

Literacy-focused programs, such as Rock and Read and Mother Goose, and parent/child programs that support healthy child development, are just some examples of the positive programming taking place that ECDI funding supports.

Additionally, MECY has partnered with other departments to support programs that provide important services to children and their families. The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) and Children's Therapy Initiative are examples of interdepartmental programs that rely on school

division partnerships, and focus on creating conditions that support early childhood development.

A new resource was implemented this school year that supports early development is *Listening and Speaking: First Steps into Literacy: A Support Document for Kindergarten Teachers and Speech-Language Pathologists*. This support document is designed to help Kindergarten teachers and speech-language pathologists enhance the oral language of all Kindergarten children in the literacy-rich Kindergarten classroom. It supports the development of listening and speaking skills in all children and provides the foundation for further literacy growth.

There continue to be many initiatives in which MECY partners support early childhood development. Manitoba's educators play a strong role in ensuring that students not only receive appropriate educational programming but that they also receive early services and supports to ensure they are able to reach their full potential.

Honourable Peter Bjornson
Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth

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Connecting with Distance Learners: ISO Tutor/Markers

By Marianne Fenn

The Distance Learning Unit (DLU) of the Department of Education, Citizenship and Youth offers a variety of compulsory and elective Independent Study Option (ISO) courses to students in Grades 7 to 12. More and more students are choosing to complete courses using this flexible alternative.

Overall, ISO course enrolment went from 3,393 in 2006–2007 to 3,835 in 2007–2008, a 13% increase. Students in Grades 9 to 12 have a range of courses available in compulsory and elective subject areas.

ISO tutor/markers, like their students, live throughout the province of Manitoba. A student from northern Manitoba may be sending assignments and tests to a tutor/marker in the southwestern part of the province, or vice versa. Given the independent nature of the course structure, and the geographic barriers to direct personal instruction, ISO tutor/markers work hard to establish meaningful connections with students they will likely never get to meet face-to-face.

In August 2008, the annual workshop for tutor/markers was held at DLU's office in Winkler. Participants discussed strategies for maintaining quality contact with students and for providing consistent and appropriate support. Many tutor/markers indicated they use phone and email to provide students with feedback, and some fax and email notes to students to help direct their learning. DLU has recently investigated adopting peer sharing software to facilitate computer-to-computer direct tutoring.

Even though there may be challenges to overcome in developing close connections with students, many tutor/markers shared descriptions of the meaningful connections they have established with their students, such as the following:

"I'm thinking of one student whose voice was full of hesitation and fear when I first talked with her. She called me pretty often during the course. She seemed very worried about her abilities as a student – always sounded like she feared she'd fail exams, etc... She ended up with an average in the high 90s."

"Students really seem to appreciate the 'one-on-one' encouragement we give them."

"Students appreciate being able to call weekends and evenings via our toll-free numbers."

Because many students who sign up for ISO courses do so to meet graduation or post-secondary enrolment requirements, some may need last-minute assistance to get their credits before a deadline. One tutor/marker mentioned marking a valedictorian's work the day before graduation so she could attend her ceremony! Although last-minute work is not encouraged, ISO tutor/markers do what they can to help students meet their personal learning goals.

With the number of students using ISO courses increasing steadily, the role that tutor/markers play in encouraging student success is very important. The end result is students receiving the credits they need, along with the opportunity to make some enduring and positive connections with their tutor/marker.

For more information, contact:

Distance Learning Unit
Telephone: 204-325-1700
or 1-800-465-9915
Email: distance.learning@gov.mb.ca

Education for Sustainable Consumption

By Anne MacDiarmid

Many schools will be celebrating Earth Day this April 22 with activities and new initiatives to keep our environment healthy.

Our quality of life now and in the future will depend on our continued impact on the Earth's resources to secure the basic requirements for existence and equitable social and economic development.

Our daily activities, our consumer choices, and our homes all reflect our environmental values. Our students and schools are actively involved in many areas, including youth forums, responsible citizenship campaigns, healthy food choices, volunteering, and challenges and reminders to

reduce water and energy usage and waste. Sustainable consumption is an emerging area of emphasis and is an important part of the United Nations Decade for Sustainable Development. Sustainable consumption involves making an effort to curb personal

consumption imbalances, exercising moderation when addressing human needs, and promoting responsible citizenship.

In education, we are supporting students' awareness of the roles they play in society and empowering them to choose responsible, sustainable lifestyles. The Manitoba curriculum has learning outcomes addressing sustainability and sustainable consumption, and these topics can be

Career Cruising: Manitoba's Website for Career Exploration

By Tom Prins

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy, and Manitoba Competitiveness, Training and Trade, as well as various career development stakeholders, are working together to develop and deliver a coordinated system of career development services.

This system is intended to assist Manitobans in setting and achieving their career goals throughout their learning and working lives.



One of the actions of this Career Development Initiative has been to purchase a provincial license to provide to all schools the internationally respected online career planning tool Career Cruising. An important feature of Career Cruising is it allows students to complete Annual Education Plans (AEPs).

incorporated as a specific theme or as an interdisciplinary approach in the classroom.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth has identified Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as a priority area, and has adopted several initiatives to address this topic. Schools are encouraged to apply for one of the three levels of the Eco-Globe Schools Recognition Program, as it supports the actions school communities are taking related to sustainability by sharing good practices and establishing indicators of progress.

For more information on this and other programs, visit the Department's ESD website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/esd>, or contact:

Anne MacDiarmid
Sustainable Development Consultant
Telephone: 204-945-6943
or 1-800-282-8069, ext. 6943
Email: anne.macdiarmid@gov.mb.ca

Commencing in Grade 7, students can use the AEP to record the results of their career and education planning activities throughout the school year. The AEP will assist students in planning their academic and career goals as they progress from grade to

grade, culminating in Grade 12 with a transition plan to their post-secondary destination.

By working on their AEP, students learn how to reflect on their progress, set goals, and plan actions that suit their personal strengths, interests, and abilities. These plans are to be viewed and revised on a regular basis as students learn more about themselves. Parents or guardians will also be encouraged to regularly review and comment on students' AEPs.

Career Cruising is a very user-friendly program that is appropriate for everyone from Grade 6 students to career-searching adults. It provides students with access to information about Canadian colleges, universities, and apprenticeship programs, as well as over 500 career profiles, each containing two multi-media interviews. It also provides students with an interest and skills assessment tool, as well as a personal portfolio tool with built-in resumé-building capabilities. For teachers, career advisors, and counsellors, it provides ready-to-use classroom activities and career resources.

As Career Cruising is a web-based program, users are able to access it from any computer with an Internet connection. Schools are encouraged to send students' usernames and passwords home with them so they can use the program together with their parents.

As one of the teachers at J.H. Bruns Collegiate put it:

"I am extremely pleased with the quality and the breadth of the resource on your website and I'm looking forward to incorporating it into my Career Education courses this year. I have been investigating a number of career matching surveys and yours was the best by far, especially in terms of the integration of interest, education plans, and current skills."

Readers are encouraged to contact their school counsellor and request the username and password. Visitors can take a tour of Career Cruising by going to <www.careercruising.com>.

For further information, contact:

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New Dance, Drama, Music, and Visual Arts Resources

By Lorrie Kirk

Learning resource review meetings can rarely be described as being filled with music, laughter, dancing, and drama, but arts education reviews are not like those for other subjects.

After Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth announced last year the release of new curriculum frameworks for each of the four arts education disciplines (Dance K-4, Drama K-4, Music K-6, and Visual Arts K-4), the next step was to identify learning resources for the implementation of these new curricula.

Teams of teacher-evaluators, nominated by their superintendents, worked meticulously through a large number of resources to determine which ones would be most appropriate for curriculum implementation. For four days, they examined each learning resource in depth against rigorous criteria and discussed and debated each title. Over and above, these teacher-evaluators spontaneously put the resources to work: they actually danced the dances, acted out drama ideas, or listened to the musical selections. There was as much laughter as serious discussion.



Now there is a pool of recommended resources for teachers and students. The Manitoba Text Book Bureau (MTBB) has the titles available for sale to schools. These new resources are listed at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/learnres/shortlists.html and in the online MTBB catalogue at www.mtbb.mb.ca.

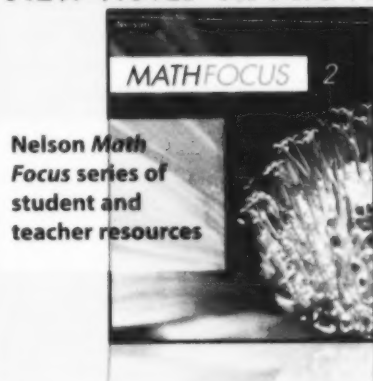
The new arts curricula are also available on the Department website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/arts/index.html.

For more information, contact:

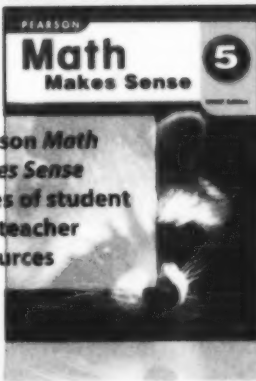
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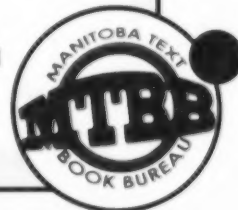
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Summer Professional Learning Opportunities

By Carole Bilyk

Hundreds of Manitoba teachers from around the province took advantage of free workshops to gather new ideas, connect with colleagues, and prepare for a new school year.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth's Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch hosted a week of workshops for Manitoba teachers from August 19 to 22, 2008. This four-day event featured workshops on curriculum changes, on assessment, and on integrating subject areas. They provided new activities for the classroom and hints for teachers who are new to teaching a specific subject or grade level or new to teaching in general.

Workshops were held primarily at John Taylor Collegiate, but there were also some sessions at the Faculty of Education building at the University of Manitoba, at 1567 Dublin Avenue, and at the Manitoba Museum.

Although attending the workshops meant giving up a few days of holiday time, teachers were very appreciative of the opportunity to attend a workshop without having to prepare for a substitute.

Participants in the workshops provided the following feedback:

- *"(This) was a great way to start your year. First time - a wonderful experience."*
- *"Excellent variety. No cost was a huge plus."*
- *"This session helped me deeper understand the teaching behind math strategies. Great, practical classroom ideas. Loved it. Well organized."*



- *"Always looking for new ideas to help me get concepts across to students with different learning styles. It is not just the presenters, but participation."*
- *"My first time. Will be back. Wonderful! Perfect time because I am just starting to think about my classes and this is really sparking my excitement & energy for the next year!! Great location."*

On Wednesday at John Taylor Collegiate, a publisher display was available for teachers to see new resources that are coming out. The publishers supplied a lunch for the participants, which was well received. Thank-you to our publisher colleagues for their continued support of the workshops.

Plans are underway for the 2009 Summer Professional Learning Opportunities sessions. Brochures and posters should be mailed out to schools in April 2009 and then posted on the Department website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12. Workshop registration information will be available at https://www4.edu.gov.mb.ca/workshops.

If you have any questions about the Summer Professional Learning Opportunities, please contact:

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From Cultural Awareness to Cultural Competency

By Marlene Gallagher

The manual *A Journey from Cultural Awareness to Cultural Competency* was written by Myra Laramée, former principal of Niji Mahkwa School, with Helen Robinson-Settee and Garry Robson of the Aboriginal Education Directorate acting as educational and traditional guides in its creation.

This manual is part of a training kit that is intended to contribute to the preservation and growth of ancestral languages and cultures by developing consistent planning and implementation processes in Aboriginal education. The kit includes a corresponding DVD, as well as copies of the Native Studies curriculum frameworks. Several documents are also included, such as the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol *Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Culture Programs, Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers and Administrators*, and *Success for All Learners*. The kit also includes additional resource material such as the DVD *Topabdewin: The Gladys Cook Story*, which is about a journey of healing from the residential schools experience.

Aboriginal education strategies must include a process for building capacity in the planning, design, implementation, and integration of indigenous knowledge, histories, beliefs and world views, practices, and lifestyles of Aboriginal people.

The learning gap about Aboriginal people is extensive, and some in the field have come to understand and identify this

expanse as the "void." This training kit is intended to help eliminate the learning gap that surrounds Aboriginal people, their histories, belief systems, traditions, contemporary lifestyles, and contributions to Canadian society. Ultimately, the training will facilitate capacity building within school divisions utilizing the train-the-trainer model.

This training kit will allow teachers and support staff responsible for Aboriginal education to make learning a positive experience for all. Aboriginal education workshops, courses, consultations, and professional development discussions have routinely found that lack of confidence, confusion, and mystery obscure the learning process. This training kit aims to demystify, clarify, and illustrate the many different facets of Aboriginal education, and provide clearer direction to those responsible for planning and implementing strategies in their schools and classrooms.

Currently, the Aboriginal Education Directorate is working with school divisions to coordinate and plan training sessions for professional development in Aboriginal education. The planning process includes the coordination of these sessions, as well as liaison among the Department, school divisions, and administrators, and following up on action items from these sessions.

For more information, contact

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Educating as Professional Inquiry

By Dr. Wayne Serebrin

Because teaching is such a complex and uncertain vocation, teachers must be professional learners who critically inquire into their teaching lives throughout their careers. My colleague Renate Schulz describes teaching as "a place where design and circumstance collide" and where teachers "must constantly learn, adapt, and stay attuned to the multiple relationships and interactions affecting their work in the classroom."

Ironically, after several years of teaching at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education, it was the complex and uncertain nature of teaching that I found missing from the model of teacher education in which I was involved—a model that separated educational philosophy and practice. As a result, the question of how to bring educational theory, research, and practice together through critical

reflection, dialogue, and moral action became the central inquiry of my scholarship from the mid-1990s to the present.

Initially, I devised a partial on-site B.Ed. teacher education model, in which I taught half my B.Ed. classes at the Faculty and the other half in collaboration with Denise Murphy and Lisa Palmer, two classroom teachers from General Byng School in the Pembina Trails School Division. After several years, this highly successful partnership expanded to include arts educators Professor Liz Coffman and Dr. Francine Morin and early years teachers Cora Campbell, Tracey Douglas, and Chris Wigglesworth. Together, in a new and fuller partnership—comprised of the Faculty of Education, the Pembina Trails School Division, and Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth—an innovative, onsite model of teacher education came into being. This inquiry-based teacher education model was housed at the Centre for Inquiry School (a public Kindergarten to Grade 4 school within-a-school, where children, families, teachers, teacher candidates, and professors collaboratively pursued questions of most significance to them).

Over the next two years, I met weekly with the co-founding five teachers and the first principal of the Centre for Inquiry School. Together, we purposefully and systematically studied

our literacy and inquiry education practices, through a combination of professional readings, sustained and critical dialogue, and individual and shared teacher self-studies aimed at co-constructing "connected and worthwhile" educational experiences with and for children and for teacher candidates. The literacy and inquiry curriculum that emerged from this research has been widely shared at local and provincial symposia, national and international conferences, through articles and book chapters, and as one of a series of Manitoba Education Research Network (MERN) monographs—exploring questions about professional cultures of educational inquiry.

Recently, my work in the scholarship of early literacy, inquiry curriculum, and inquiry-based teacher education has developed into a new, collaborative partnership between the Faculty of Education and the Seven Oaks School Division. Over the past three years, working in close collaboration with my Faculty colleague Liz Coffman, and inspired by the vision and leadership of my colleague Lydia Hedrich (Assistant Superintendent of the Seven Oaks School Division), I have had the privilege of building educational relationships with a strong Faculty of Education early years teaching team and a generous and insightful group of administrative and teacher leaders at École Constable Edward Finney School, École James Nisbet Community School, École Riverbend Community School, and West St. Paul School. As partners, we have co-designed early years education and teacher education that create space and time for all participants to ponder and actively explore what it means to live "good and worthwhile" lives.

For me, educational theory, research, and practice are about making a worthwhile difference in learners' lives and about creating opportunities for learners to meaningfully contribute to the lives of others.

I can think of no better place than Manitoba to be a collaborative learner and educator.

profile

Dr. Wayne Serebrin is a caring and passionate educator who has been recognized seven times by the University of Manitoba's "outstanding graduating B.Ed. student of the year" for contributions he has made to students' professional education. He has also received both the University of Manitoba's Dr. and Mrs. H.H. Saunderson award and the Olive Beatrice Stanton award for excellence in university teaching. Serebrin is quick to credit his students, his early years teaching colleagues and children in the field, as well as his colleague Professor Joan Irvine (with whom he team-taught for several years after joining the University of Manitoba Faculty of Education in 1990, following his first career as an early years teacher) for his passion for teaching. For Serebrin, teaching is about listening closely to learners and collaborating with them in the design of focused studies that draw upon individual and shared experiences and all learners' significant questions. He is grateful for the wisdom local educators have shared with him and for the writings of educational scholars who make it possible to imagine what education might be.



Early Intervention Leads to Success

By Carol Frisch (Manitou School, Prairie Spirit School Division), Michelle Grenier (École Somerset School, Prairie Spirit School Division), and Andrea Marginet (Consultant, Rural and Northern Development Initiative)

Kindergarten is a time of excitement, exploration, discovery, and a great deal of learning. Most children arrive at the classroom door equipped with everything they need to become successful learners, and some children have challenges that may interfere with the learning process.

Early detection of difficulties in speech and language development, fine and gross motor skills, vision, and hearing is essential. Some students entering Kindergarten have received specialized services provided for preschoolers. This early intervention provides an opportunity to develop essential skills and prepare the children for learning.

Kindergarten teachers are often involved in transition meetings where information about the learning needs are shared. A preschool child who receives services from a speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, audiologist, or other service provider is already on the way to learning new skills. Through transition planning, the teacher is better equipped with information and strategies to help the child learn. The teacher can plan and begin to implement specific programming with less time lost trying to establish what the child needs in order to be successful.

Schools also receive services from school clinicians (speech-language pathologists, psychologists, occupational and physical therapists, social workers) to continue programs after school entry and to identify needs that may not have been detected prior to Kindergarten. These clinicians provide support and resources to teachers. Some of the recommendations can be very simple, yet extremely effective in promoting success for students, such as having them sit on a move 'n' sit cushion or a ball chair, allowing them to chew gum, and having them wear a weighted vest or ear protectors.

In our schools, we also participate in vision and hearing screening in Kindergarten. One Kindergarten student had difficulty printing her name and was placing the letters all over the page. When counting a row of objects, her finger would bounce randomly about the group. Her challenge in visual tracking was identified through this screening procedure, and

after two weeks of therapy she made a remarkable improvement in her ability to complete these and other tasks. This child, who was previously frustrated and overwhelmed, became confident, willing to try new things, and excited about learning. This is one of the many success stories of early intervention.

Language development is essential to learning and plays a critical role in the later development of successful readers. As children become more confident with language, they become more active participants by listening and speaking during classroom discussions and story time. Through early



intervention, children are able to absorb more from the language-rich environment in a Kindergarten classroom.

In response to a call for participation in a pilot study in the

development of the support document *Listening and Speaking: First Steps into Literacy*, an École Somerset Kindergarten teacher collaborated with a speech-language pathologist in a year-long grassroots-level study to expand the oral language components of the Kindergarten English language arts curriculum and support the design of a functional instrument. Over the pilot year, they developed a better sense of how a teacher and clinician can collaborate on early intervention strategies to develop oral language in the classroom, and to provide parents with the support to foster oral language development within the home.

Early intervention is essential because it identifies and addresses students' specific learning needs. As these needs are met, the child can be a successful learner. Success builds self-esteem, which provides the fuel for future learning.

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The newsletter includes articles from the education community and from Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. Signed articles appearing in this magazine express the views of their authors and not necessarily those of the Department.

Distribution:

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A similar document has been developed by the Bureau de l'éducation française Division for the Français and the French Immersion Programs.

Contact Information:

We invite contributions to Education Manitoba. When forwarding submissions, please include your name and telephone number, and send materials in print and electronic formats to:

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